

WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION

Extension Service

Washington 25 D. C.

Reserve

WHY YOUNG PEOPLE BEHAVE AS THEY DO

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4-H Leadership is an art. It is an art which deals with people -- young people. 4-H leaders deal with them at a very formative stage. Leaders therefore have a profound influence on the future of the young people in their community. Each club member is a different kind of person. He is different outside of the club from what he is when he is with the group. We not only need to understand each one, but to build our program so that the group can do things together, and at the same time permit the individual to develop according to his interests and ability with full support by the parents. There are at least four big wants or desires shared by all young people. They (1) want to belong (2) want to achieve (3) want to become independent, and (4) want to have experiences. The following notes may give you clues to help you understand why some of your members act as they do.

THEY WANT TO BELONG			Age	Age	Age
			9 to 13 or 14	14 to 17 or 18	18 to 21
We all want friends. The desire to belong is natural and helps to bring youth into contact with others, and this satisfies the need for friends. By "belonging" they are helped to grow, because part of the value they place on themselves as persons is gained from the values others place on them and what others think of them. They need to make good in the eyes of others.	Desire to belong is partly satisfied by being a part of a family. Gets much satisfaction from belonging to a group or gang of same sex. Boys want to be with boys, girls with girls. Likes to tease, takes pride in high rivalry between boys and girls. Will do what the group does without much objection.	Less interested in the family: as the important "group" to belong to. Interest in belonging to a group increases, but begins to "look the group over." Boys want to "rate" well with girls, and girls want to rate well with boys. Boys are likely to be sensitive -- feelings easily hurt. Hero worship becoming important. What boys and girls of their age think and do is more important than what adults think or do. Parents' opinions are minimized.			
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THEY WANT TO ACHIEVE

Youth wants recognition for what he does. All about him people are admired, publicized, acclaimed for what they do--on the farm, in politics in the war plants on the battle front. He wants to know that his efforts are worth while and appreciated, too. As he does things by himself, he is satisfying himself that he does not have to be dependent. He is on the road to independence. However rate of achievement varies with each member, therefore projects need to keep pace with ability in order to tax real effort. Achievements in doing things for others as well as for himself should be included. War-effort projects are important in this regard.

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Age 9 to 13 or 14

Likes to show off - "Took what I can do." Interested in exploring. Often starts many more things than he finishes. More and more wants to do things through his own efforts. Likes to have leader or parent approve and say "well done." Seeks advice of parents and local leaders. He wants to work with things.

Age 14 to 17 or 18

What the group thinks of his achievements is more important than the approval of adults. Youth begins to have definite ideas about what he wants to do. Wants to make good, be important, somewhat exclusive. Recognition helps him satisfy his desires. He begins to have definite ideas of doing specialized kind of work, like cattle feeding. Wants to work with things and deal with ideas.

Age 18 to 21

Will work toward achievements in the line of work he likes and he thinks worth while. Young people of this age are thinking about life plans, what they want to become or do. The things for which they are recognized should result from an earnest struggle in keeping with their ability, in order to give an increased sense of satisfaction to the feeling of being "grown-up". Partnership plans begin to take shape.

THEY WANT TO BECOME INDEPENDENT	Age		Age		Age	
	9 to 13 or 14		14 to 17 or 18		18 to 21	
Becoming independent of parents is a sign of growing up. The desire to be independent is often troublesome to parents and leaders, but it cannot be avoided if the boy or girl is to grow up normally. Young people today mature earlier in life than a generation ago. The desire for independence may be shown by their tendency to spend more time away from home, or their impatience with adult leaders' guidance and preference for making up their own minds. The rate at which the feeling of independence develops varies at different ages and in different individuals. Program planning, kinds of projects and requirements, as well as democratic procedures should be carefully watched in order to give each member a chance to fit in with his ideas and an opportunity to work at his own pace.	: At this age the boy or girl is largely dependent on adults, either parents or leaders. He tends to do things to show independence but will soon come back for advice and counsel and protection. Too much sheltering may cause him to shrink from jobs. How the boy or girl is treated at this age, habits acquired, attitudes developed, will play a big part in the kind of person he or she becomes as an adult.	: Wants to be his own boss, and makes such intentions known in many ways. His group gives encouragement to this attitude. The more this tendency is opposed by adults, the more determined he may become. He becomes less interested in adult controls, because he is very sure of his own judgment and ability. Seems to lack a sense of responsibility, but will assume it if it is equal to his own estimation of his ability. Needs money to carry out his desires for independence.	: The youth of this age is close to the period of being a voting citizen--a legal "free agent." Since he knows he will soon have independence, he does not fight so hard for it. His plans are becoming more definite about how he will make a living, what he will do, what he can earn, whom he will marry. His problems about such things as education, social activities, opportunities for him in his community, are real. He needs money--and how to get it is important. He is concerned about government, public policy, and large issues.			
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THEY WANT TO HAVE EXPERIENCE-- ADVENTURE	Age 9 to 13 or 14	Age 14 to 17 or 18	Age 18 to 21
Young people are growing rapidly in size, height, weight, and energy. Boys double their strength between 12 and 16 years of age. So they need and want to be up and active. Youth wants to experience thrills, adventure. They want to do man-sized jobs, meet on common ground successful men and women "who really count." They like to give a new angle to an old activity. Leadership can stimulate youth to see new angles to everyday tasks or old jobs. War jobs and projects related to the war effort need to be made useful and valuable experiences for them.	Almost any kind of activity or experience appeals. Just to do something is satisfying. Interests change, and enthusiasm for a particular activity goes up and down quickly. The experiences and explorations are measured in terms of likes or dislikes--"I hate to do chores" or "I don't like to wash dishes." The value of the experience is not important to him.	Wants the experiences to be man-sized. Doesn't want the things he does to be regarded as "kid stuff." He will stick to a project longer, but still wants a chance to try other things also--to experiment. Likes to work with a group. Is anxious to have a real part in the war effort. Sometimes doesn't see the job at home as being as important as being in service.	The person of this age is particularly concerned with the why of the activity, what is its meaning--its value. Social contacts and experiences for good times are highly important. He works at what he likes and thinks worth while. He wants experiences that are related to what he will do to make a living or earn more money. He is ready for large enterprises.
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